

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment cancels, without prejudice, claims 1-8 in the underlying PCT Application No. PCT/EP98/00827. This Preliminary Amendment also cancels, without prejudice, claims 1-6 of the revised pages of the Annex to the International Preliminary Examination Report, and adds new claims 7-14. The new claims conform the claims to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules and do not add new matter to the application.

The above amendments to the specification and abstract conform the specification and abstract to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules, and do not introduce new matter into the application.

The underlying PCT Application No. PCT/EP98/00827 includes an International Search Report, dated June 8, 1998. The Search Report includes a list of documents that were uncovered in the underlying PCT Application. An English translation of the Search Report is provided herewith.

The underlying PCT Application No. PCT/EP98/00827 also includes a Preliminary Examination Report, dated January 15, 1999. An English translation of the Preliminary Examination Report is submitted herewith.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of the present application is new, non-obvious, and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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